

PROFILE

HAZEL WOODWARD

Casual observers of the UKSG could be forgiven for being a little confused by the names of the Group's Chairmen: Woodworth of Loughborough now seems to have become Woodward of Loughborough. Indeed Hazel Woodward, recently elected Chair of the Group, has sometimes been asked "Are you Mrs David Woodworth?" and she recalls that when she and David both attended an IATUL conference in Germany some years ago they found that they were booked into the same room, the hotel assuming they must be married. The similarities however are purely coincidental.

To clarify things, not least for our overseas readers: Hazel is Senior Assistant Librarian in charge of the Information Department at Loughborough University of Technology (David being a Senior Lecturer at Loughborough College).

Born in Leeds she moved to Nottingham as a child but after nearly starting work in the Personnel Department at Marks and Spencer she took up a one year traineeship at Nottinghamshire Public Library under the guidance of Ken Stockham (an 'inspiration'). When this was completed she returned to Leeds to study for a CNA degree at Leeds Polytechnic in Librarianship and German.

Her first professional post was Assistant Librarian at Trinity and All Saints College in Horsforth just outside Leeds where she stayed for 2 years. She was then successful in her application for the post of Deputy Librarian at the College of Education in Loughborough which she joined in 1976. The College was amalgamated with the University two years later, in line with the similar mergers of teacher training colleges throughout the country, to become the 'humanities' faculty of the University.

With the building of the new Pilkington Library in 1980, all library collections were centralised and she took up the post of Serials Librarian, a position she held until 1988. Her new post in the Information Department gives her a new viewpoint on serials. From being a specialist in the processing and management of periodicals she is now working with a team whose role is to exploit the contents of these publications, so her



involvement with serials has in no way diminished. At the Pilkington Library there has been a deliberate policy to create a central information department whose function is to be highly active in the provision of information to users rather than adopting the more passive 'collection building' role. A whole range of databases are used by her and her colleagues in providing a service to research staff and undergraduates and user education has a high priority. Specially designed research seminars tailored to departmental 'information' requirements are offered on a regular basis.

During her period as head of the serials department she was involved in two research projects for the BNB Research Fund, one concerned with electronic document delivery, looking at article versus on-line provision and the other concerned with the optimisation of serials - considering detailed costings of areas such as serial acquisition, binding, free subscriptions etc. Reports on both projects have been published by the British Library.

Hazel joined the UKSG in her early years as serials librarian and was elected to the committee in 1983. In 1986 she became Education Officer for the Group and rapidly showed her talents as a 'no fuss' unflappable organiser who coordinated and ran a number of regular courses and seminars as well as creating closer educational links with bodies such as the National Acquisitions Group. It was apparent that there was 'a gap in the market' for serials education and training and the response to the courses was very good. A particular success late last year was the exhibition of automated library systems at Birmingham, run jointly by the UKSG, NAG and the MARC Users Group. Hazel feels that there is

still considerably more the Group can do in the area of education and training; not least for example with regard to the library schools where interest in serials has been unusually low. 'Serials' needs to achieve a higher profile amongst library school students (and academic staff) she believes and ways to achieve this could include lectures by UKSG committee members or the concept of a travelling workshop. Certainly more publicity on the importance of serial publications is needed in this area.

Hazel also thinks that there is much the Group can do in forging closer links with serials librarians in other European countries, helping for example, in the establishment of bodies similar to the UKSG, or running educational events.

In May the Committee of the UKSG held a two day 'think tank' which Hazel felt was important to enable it to consider what it wants to achieve, the direction in which it needs to go and its general aims and objectives. Such time is usually not available at routine committee meeting at which topics such as the conference, membership etc usually take priority. (A brief report on the two day meeting is included in this issue).

Hazel has no doubts about the value and role of the UKSG which she feels has been particularly successful because its 'tripartite' nature enables all parties to learn more about the way the others work - which can only be of benefit to the end users. Whilst the large majority of subscription agents have joined the Group, she feels that it would be good to see many more publishers joining. Are they perhaps cautious about what they might see as a pressure group? She is sure that the only way that the Group can remain successful is by ensuring that there is equality of membership irrespective of the nature of the member organisations.

A current priority at the Pilkington library is the installation of the BLCMP library automation system. The serials module is being tested and it is hoped that it will be in use by the end of 1989. Some 4,000 serials titles are taken of which approximately 2,500 are purchased subscriptions. Traditionally the library has adopted a 'do it yourself' approach to library automation, preferring to develop systems in house. In fact Loughborough was known in the 1970s for its work on developing an automated serials management system. However, dedicated library systems staff have been lost over the years without being replaced and indeed the existing computer itself also came to the end of its useful life so the decision was made to go for an integrated system.

What are the trends that Hazel sees taking place in the world of serials? She does not feel that methods of acquiring serial publications will change radically overnight; subscriptions to hardcopy journals will continue, not least because it is difficult for example to quantify or replace the very real value to readers of casual browsing. The system will 'alter at the edges' and there will be an increasing diversity of information sources and ways of presenting information to users e.g CD ROM, on-line facilities etc. This will place greater pressure however on library budgets as it is unlikely that there will be extra funds for 'new media'; this in turn will create major dilemmas for librarians in attempting to cope with the mix of 'products' available. Such budget constraints and new formats will mean that librarians will need to become more sophisticated in adopting management information techniques. Serials librarians will increasingly become accountable to their paymasters and need to look for value for money as well as reviewing their methods of purchasing and providing more cost effective services.

One point in her serials life which was particularly enjoyable and outside the normal Loughborough routines was her trip to China in 1988. Accompanied by Stella Pilling of the BLDSC she organised a very successful eight day seminar on serials management, on behalf of the British Council, for periodicals librarians from academic libraries throughout China. A repeat trip would be very welcome, she says.

In the wider context of life at Loughborough University Hazel has been very active and successful in focusing attention on equal opportunities. Following a union initiative and subsequent discussions the University has now set up an Equal Opportunities Working Party to look at areas such as access to education, child care facilities, 'non traditional' entrants etc. Hazel is an active union member, currently assistant secretary of the local branch of the AUT, something which has recently taken up a considerable amount of time, in the light of the industrial dispute throughout the universities.

Outside the full time demands of her work at the Pilkington Library, the increasing involvement with the UKSG and the realms of university life, Hazel finds her spare time very precious and enjoys spending it with her husband and two sons, aged 4 and 7.

Albert Prior